

REMARKS

Reconsideration of the application in view of the above amendments and the following remarks are respectfully requested.

Claims 1-5 and 7-9 are pending in the application, wherein Claims 1 and 5 are independent claims. It is gratefully acknowledged that Claims 5, 7 and 8 have been allowed. However, Claims 1-4 and 9 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Hama et al.* (U.S. Patent 6,944,481) in view of *JP 2002064599 (Yamada)*, and in further view of *Bradley et al.* (U.S. Patent 5,805,067).

In response thereto, applicant has amended independent Claim 1 to incorporate subject matter from allowed Claim 5, as set forth above herein. Consequently, amended independent Claim 1 is in condition for allowance.

Without conceding the patentability of dependent Claims 2-4 and 9, *per se*, these claims are believed to be patentable over the combination of *Hama*, *JP 2002064599* and *Bradley*, based on their respective dependency from amended independent Claim 1.

Accordingly, Claims 1-4 and 9 as now presented together with previously allowed Claims 5, 7 and 8 are in condition for allowance. Should the Examiner believe that a telephone conference or personal interview would facilitate resolution of any remaining matters, the Examiner may contact Applicant's attorney at the number given below.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Paul J. Farrell", is written over a horizontal line.

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